

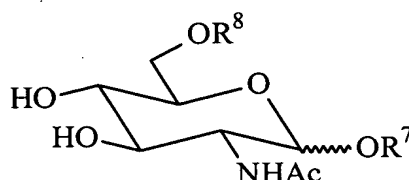
**Amendments to the Claims: Listing of Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application:

1.-20. (Canceled).

21. (New) A skin external preparation comprising an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (3):

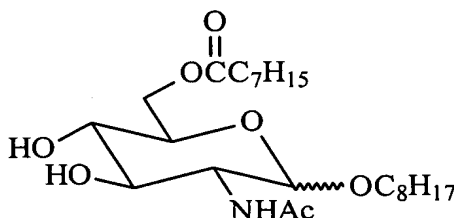
formula (3)



wherein  $R^7$  is an alkyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms;  $R^8$  is an acyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms; and the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

22. (New) The skin external preparation of Claim 21, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (3) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (6):

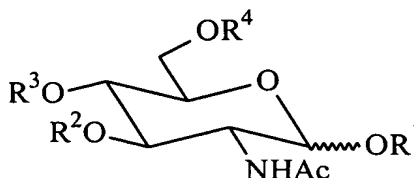
formula (6)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

23. (New) A method for promoting hyaluronic acid production in skin, comprising applying to the skin a composition comprising an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (1):

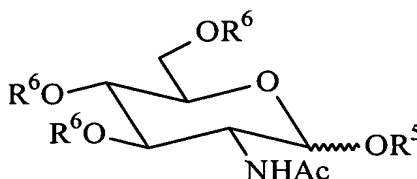
formula (1)



wherein R<sup>1</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms; R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, and R<sup>4</sup> are hydrogen atoms or acyl groups having 2 to 18 carbon atoms and may be all the same or different from others; the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ ; provided that R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, and R<sup>4</sup> must not be all hydrogen atoms.

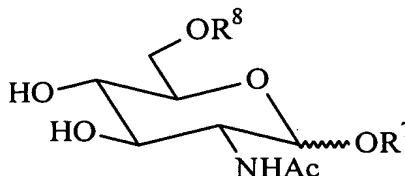
24. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (2) or (3):

formula (2)



wherein R<sup>5</sup> is an alkyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms; R<sup>6</sup> is a hydrogen atom or an acetyl group; and the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ ; or

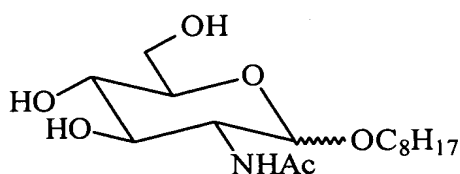
formula (3)



wherein  $R^7$  is a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms;  $R^8$  is an acyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms; and the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

25. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (4):

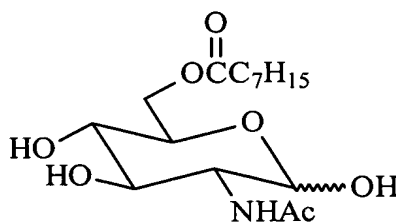
formula (4)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

26. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (5):

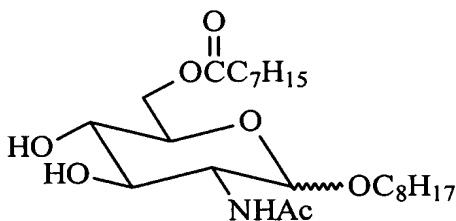
formula (5)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

27. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (6):

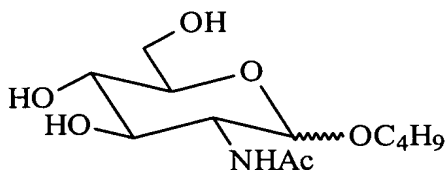
formula (6)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

28. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (7):

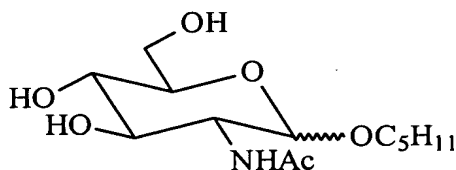
formula (7)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

29. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (8):

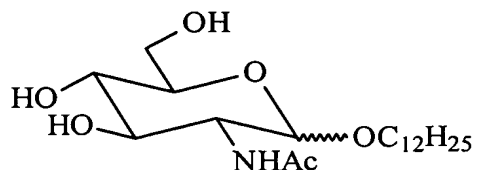
formula (8)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

30. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (9):

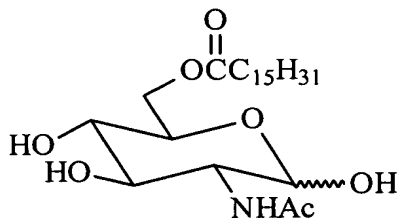
formula (9)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

31. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (10):

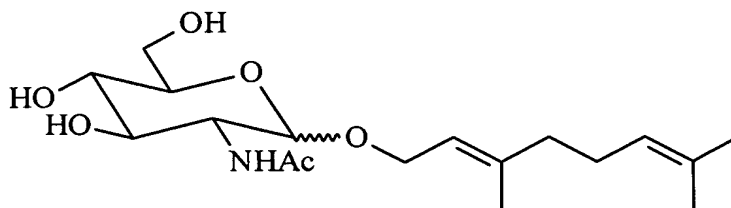
formula (10)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

32. (New) A method for promoting hyaluronic acid production in skin, comprising applying to the skin a composition comprising an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (11):

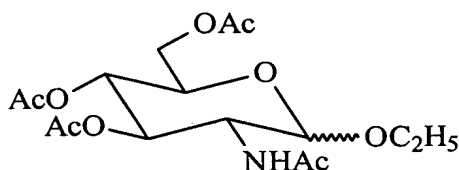
formula (11)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

33. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (12):

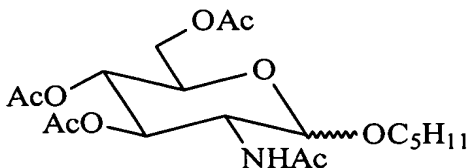
formula (12)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

34. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (13):

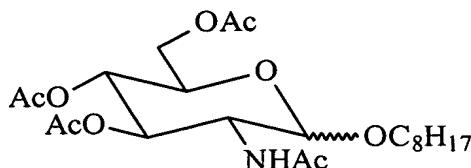
formula (13)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

35. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (1) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (14):

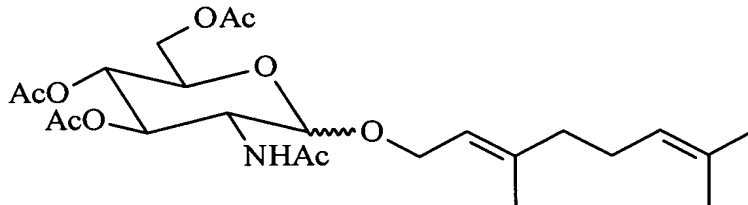
formula (14)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

36. (New) A method for promoting hyaluronic acid production in skin, comprising applying to the skin a composition comprising is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (15):

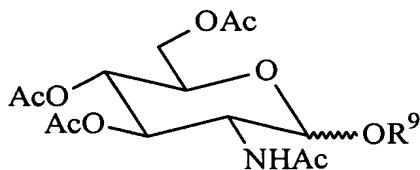
formula (15)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

37. (New) A method for promoting hyaluronic acid production in skin, comprising applying to the skin a composition comprising an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (16):

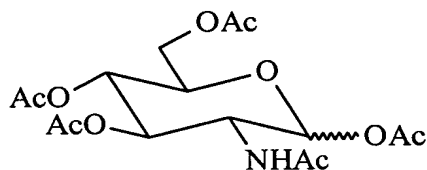
formula (16)



wherein  $R^9$  is an acyl group having 2 to 16 carbon atoms and the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

38. (New) The method of Claim 37, wherein the N-acetylglucosamine derivative of the formula (16) is an N-acetylglucosamine derivative of formula (17):

formula (17)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ .

39. (New) The method of Claim 23, wherein the method is for retaining vital, elastic, and moist skin.

40. (New) The method of Claim 32, wherein the method is for retaining vital, elastic, and moist skin.

41. (New) The method of Claim 36, wherein the method is for retaining vital, elastic, and moist skin.

42. (New) The method of Claim 37, wherein the method is for retaining vital, elastic, and moist skin.